

REMARKS

After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-12 are all the claims presently pending in this application. New claims 11 and 12 are hereby added.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 8 and 10 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form (with the proviso that the 35 U.S.C. §112 rejection is overcome). Claim 8 is hereby rewritten in independent form as new claim 11, and claim 12 corresponds to claim 10.

Regarding the 35 U.S.C. §112 rejection based on indefiniteness, Applicants respectfully submit that the foregoing claim amendments (including new claim 11) overcome such rejection. As for the Examiner's comments in the last full paragraph on page 2 of the Office Action, claim 2 is correct, and claim 2 does not exclude the embodiment of Fig. 3. Fig. 3 does not show a venting gap between the side portion ring 7 and the bead portion ring 9. Rather, the gaps 22 are, respectively, between ring portions 7e and 7d, and between 7d and 7c. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection under 35 U.S.C. §112.

The prior art rejections are respectfully traversed based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In all of the cited references, the venting gap is merely arranged between the tread portion and the sidewall portion and/or between the sidewall portion and the bead portion. None of the cited references discloses or suggests a venting gap arranged between sub-rings constituting the side portion ring for forming the sidewall portion, as recited in the instant claims. Therefore, the present invention is entirely different from all of the cited references and could not have easily been conceived therefrom absent the proscribed use of hindsight.

Regarding Ladouce, the clearances J (Fig. 1) do not extend over a full circumference of the side ring. Instead, Ladouce indicates (bottom of col. 3 and top of col. 4) that one or more holes may be used to communicate with the outside. Youngblood is also deficient, in that it discloses a venting gap 9 between the side ring 2a/2b and bead ring 6a/6b, not within the side ring 2a/2b. Finally, JP '929 discloses vent holes 12 and 13 in the side ring of the mold and, thus, is also deficient. Thus, even if the references could somehow be combined, the combination would itself be deficient *vis-à-vis* the claimed invention.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. Serial No. 09/993,504

Art Unit 1733
Q65011

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayment to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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